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ISRAEL WILLING TO HAVE PROXIMITY TALKS WITH EGYPT

JERUSALEM (WNS) -Israel's announcement that it was willing to participate in proximity talks with Egypt for an interim agreement to reopen the Suez Canal was welcomed by the U.S. and British governments. But whether the talks would begin depends on the ability of the U.S. to bring Egypt to the bargaining table. Egypt has declared it was breaking off all contacts with the U.S. and was known to prefer a resumption of the (UN Middle East mediator Dr. Gunnar V.) Jarring talks.

Sources here said that while the U.S. has not given any assurances that it would not put forth its own proposals, they had agreed to refrain from raising any points of their own without first attempting to reach an agreement with Israel.



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In Washington, Israeli sources said Israel had

received everything it had requested except a guarantee that the U.S. would use its veto in any United Nations action with which Israel disagreed because the U.S. could not give its right of veto to any other nation. They said Pres. Nixon's decision to grant Israel all planes and other military equipment needed for the next two years without exacting "payment" in political terms in either the interim talks or a renewed Jarring mission was based, not on election-year politics, but on the results of the recent Indo-Pakistani War, which highlighted once again the UN's impotence and the dangers of a military imbalance.

Secretary of State William P. Rogers, welcoming Israel's announcement, stated that

"close proximity" talks are "essential for progress" towards peace in the Middle East and that the U.S. "would favor a resumption of the Jarring talks" if that would help bring about a settlement in the Middle East.

In London, a government spokesman said Britain believed "an interim agreement for the reopening of the Suez Canal would help reduce tension in the Middle East and break the present deadlock but it should be a step towards a comprehensive settlement and not an end in itself."

United Nations press spokesmen refused to comment on Israel's statement in the absence of Secretary General Kurt Waldheim and Jarring.

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